

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
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PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Carl Takamura

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Phone: (808) 541-1986

**Rep. Mazie Hirono Promotes Increased Funding
for Colleges Serving Native Hawaiians**

State colleges and universities to receive millions of new dollars each year

WASHINGTON, D.C.--- WASHINGTON, D.C. --- Rep. Mazie K. Hirono played a key role to insert language in the College Cost Reduction Act of 2007 to provide an increase of \$30 million for colleges and universities serving Native Hawaiians and Alaska Natives over the next five years.

This legislation was approved by the House Education and Labor Committee on Wednesday by a vote of 30 to 16. Hirono, a member of the committee, worked with the committee leadership to ensure increased funding to help schools serve Native Hawaiians.

"Our colleges and universities have established many programs for Native Hawaiians to reach those who could not afford the cost of higher education," she said. "The increased funding will allow our colleges and universities to expand these initiatives and provide resources that will enrich our entire community."

The additional funds of \$6 million annually for the next five years are to be used for services such as tutoring, training faculty, improving facilities, student outreach, and general capacity building. State institutions which qualify as Native Hawaiian-Serving

Institutions and have been receiving grants include the University of Hawaii, Chaminade University, and Kapi`olani Community College.

Rep. Hirono noted that only 14 percent of Native Hawaiians have a college degree, compared to a national average of 24 percent. "I am proud to support these programs that are working to eliminate an educational disparity that exists throughout our state and causes long term economic hardship for Hawaiian families," Rep. Hirono said.

The Department of Education also announced earlier this week that more than \$2.6 million dollars were awarded under the Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions Program.

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